

*Human Mind's Transformation is Crucial for Self  
Realization*

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*The human mind is central to comprehend and manoeuvre the natural world. Though it is the crown expression of Nature in the mortal world, it is inherently inconsistent. It is often captivated by many animalistic habits. One of the animalistic habits of mind is its fickleness. Sikh theology emphasizes that one must learn how to control and transform one's mind to come out of this condition. An individual can do so by diverting his/her mind from its feral inclinations and turning it to the mind's innate longing for spiritual enlightenment. Sikh doctrines assert that the contemplation on God (imbibing love of God in one's life) helps restrain the mind and attain self-realization and everlasting equipoise.*

Sikh theology asserts that the human mind is central to comprehend and manoeuvre the natural world and human evolution. It argues that human life is an opportunity to harness/transform the mind to achieve self-realization and live a quality life. However, the human mind is often captivated by many animalistic habits. Sri Guru Granth Sahib (SGGS), the sacred Sikh scripture [1], points out this situation as “*Kartoot pasoo ki Manas jaat.*” **Meaning:** Although human beings belong to the homo-sapiens class, their traits are those of sub-human animals. (M. 5, SGGS, p. 267)

One of the animalistic habits of mind is its fickleness. It is the primary cause of unhappiness and failure in achieving our prescribed life goals. SGGS emphasizes that one must learn how to control and transform one's mind to come out of this condition. An individual can do so by diverting his/her mind from its feral inclinations and turning it to the mind's innate longing for spiritual enlightenment. By cultivating an attitude of compassion and contentment, one can harness one's mind.

Biologists and psychologists point out that the human mind has been affected by prenatal human biography [2-3]. This occurrence has happened throughout the history of the feral world. The evolutionary experiences' prenatal history points out that the rule of survival was the only experience practiced for many life cycles. As marked on human minds, it guided our ancient ancestors in selecting the best behavioural approaches for their survival. They mastered to spend most of their time in search and hunt for food to gratify their hunger. They evolved their physical skills and mental abilities to fight in self-defence when faced with danger or attack. They courted the members of the opposite sex for reproduction. Their needs were of the sub-human type, and their acquired skills were animalistic at best compared to today's human needs [4-5].

These marks of the sub-human psyche are present in us even today. Unfortunately, these lessons from our sub-human history are of little benefit in the new world, which is ever developing. Instead, these imprints hinder our spiritual progress. In addition, their expression in our life becomes the basis of many problems. Remember that the human mind is nothing more than a menome of multifarious memes. The current meme-centred culture exhibits a substrate of pain and anguish.

The memes being the ideas or experiences of others; these are self-centred. The memes are proficient in co-evolving and replicating without any empathy for their human hosts. The human mind, infected by memes, forgets the actual purpose of life. It is discomforting, disturbing, and degenerating.

The cultural messages are the vehicles to spread the copies of memes. They take control of one's mind and make one's life very unpleasant and disgusting. Meme-based mind and culture is a robust control system. It foists an imperceptible controlling structure on our language, thinking, philosophical systems, political behaviour, religion, and even history. Thereby they all become tools of our captivity into never-ending misery. SGGS proclaims: "*Maṭ budh̄ bhavī na bujh̄ ī anṭar lobh̄ vikār. Lakḥ chā orāsīh̄ bharamḍe bharam bharam ho e kḥu ār*". **Meaning:** People don't understand that their intellect and understanding are perverted. They are filled with greed and corruption. They wandered as lost and confused through millions of incarnations. They were ruined through these experiences during such wandering. (M.3, SGGS, p.27)

## Fickleness, Transformation and Spiritual Success

Though the human mind is the crown expression of Nature in the mortal world, it is inherently inconsistent. The human mind's this characteristic is the primary source of all the misery in one's life. Several factors contribute to the mind's fickleness. The fickleness of the mind

drives away success in our daily life and is the biggest hindrance on the path of spiritual enlightenment [6-7]. Until the causes of the mind's fickleness are not removed, one may not experience peace. Guru Tegh Bahadur, the ninth Sikh Guru, indicates the fickleness of mind in his verses as; "*Marig tarisnā ji o jhūtho ih jag dekh tās uṭh dhāvai.*" **Meaning:** Like the deer's delusion (mirage), this world is unreal (false), and yet, beholding it, one's mind chase after it. (M. 9, SGGS, p. 219)

Analytically speaking, there are two main factors, which are the basis of our mind. The first factor, our species' evolutionary past, is dominated by five inborn urges of lust, anger, avarice, attachment, and narcissism. The second factor is realizing one's finite existence and aspiration to transcend one's finitude by relating oneself to the transcendent Infinite Wisdom (God). Often the urge to lead a God-centred life lies submerged in the mind. In such a situation, we live a power-hungry and self-centred life. The self-centred (egoistic) life is built on a false view of the world (*Maya*).

*Maya* is a transitory thing that allures a human being towards power and ego-centred energy. It divests a person's that potentiality of mind, which helps him/her rise to Infinite Wisdom's vision. This instability of mind gives birth to discontent, greed, fear, selfishness, deceit, fanaticism, prejudice, caste, colour and creed divisions, and indifference to spiritual advancements. This fickleness of mind does not allow us to establish a better society and world or attain spiritual enlightenment. Our mind imparts generic wisdom in the grips of memes, mimetic lessons, genes, and genetic instructions. This wisdom applies only to physical or environmental conditions. It incites us to act in ways that have been generally useful in the past for similar situations. As the cultural imprisonment continues, the human mind keeps roving and never learns to be still or calm down. The mind's fickleness has become so strong in present times that it has rendered us helpless.

Spiritual success lies in the transformation of the mind through the eradication of its fickleness. An individual can obtain it with a continual and consistent focus on imbibing the virtues of Truth, compassion, love and wisdom in one's life. Through the self-effort of concentration and contemplation, a person receives the grace for the mind's transformation. Cultivating the habits of honest earnings and sharing (one's honest proceeds) with the needy helps a person to progress on the path of spiritual realization. To tame the mind's fickleness, the contemplation of Gurmat philosophy is a potent tool for self-improvement, thereby improving society and the world. Guru Tegh Bahadur illustrates this paradigm in his hymns as: "*Sādhō man kā māt̃ tī āga o. Kām krodh sangat̃ durjan kī tāt̃ te ahinis bhāga o. ||1|| rahā o. Sukh dukh dono sam kar jānai a or māt̃ apmānā. Harakh sog te rahai aṭṭā tīn jag tat̃ pachhānā. ||1|| Ustat̃ nindā do ū tī āgai khojai pad̃ nirbānā.*" **Meaning:** Holy Saints! Forsake the pride of your mind. Let it be your daily routine to shirk excessive desires, anger and the company of evil people.

||1||Pause|| One who knows that pain and pleasure, honour and dishonour are the same. One who remains untouched by joy and sorrow realizes the true essence in the world. ||1|| Renounce praise and slander; rather seek salvation. (M. 9, SGGS, p. 219)

## Conclusion

Sikh doctrines warn us about this helplessness. It urges us to seek the grace of the “Infinite Wisdom” for saving ourselves from the grips of the animalistic mind. We must strive to harness the mind and then channel its potential towards realizing truth, compassion, wisdom, service, and sharing in our lives. The contemplation on God (imbibing love of God in one’s life) helps restrain the mind and attain everlasting peace. Guru Tegh Bahadur describes such a situation as: “*Mā ī mai dhan pā i o har nām. Man mero dhāvan te chhūti o kar baitho bisrām.*” **Meaning:** O mother! I have gathered the wealth of the Divine virtues, My mind has stopped its wanderings, and now, it has come to rest. (M.9. SGGS, p. 1186)

Guru Nanak delineates such a state in his hymns as; “*Man mēh joṭ joṭ mēh manū ā panch mile gur bhā ī.*” **Meaning:** The mind is immersed in the love of the eternal Truth, and its essence lies in mind. Oh! My Gur-Bhai! The five urges are now focused on it. (M.1, SGGS, p. 879)

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